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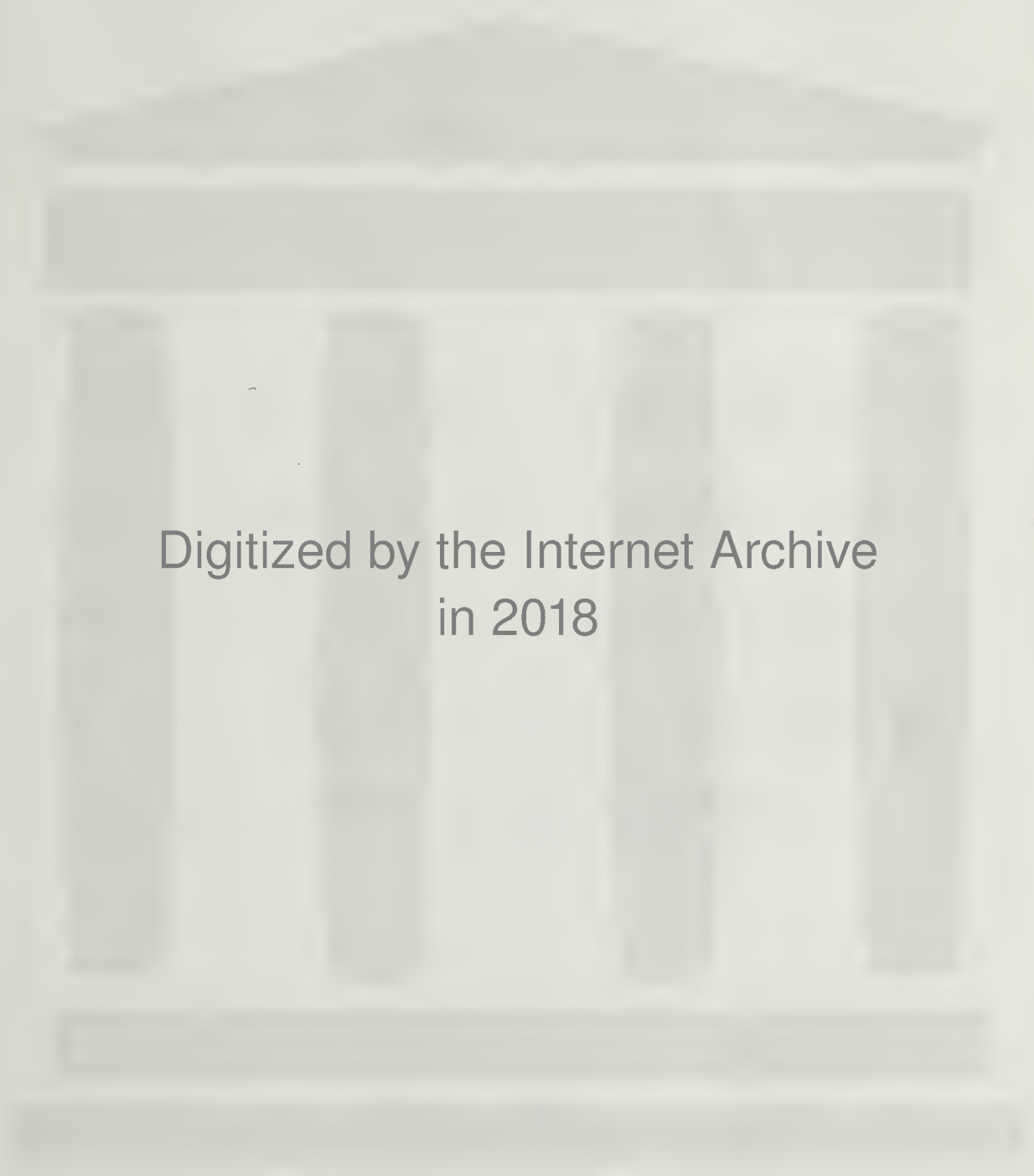
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°C. Friedrich Boerner

A short biography written by his
son Theodore A. Boerner and
published in commemoration of
the one hundredth anniversary
of his coming to America.

Cedarburg, Wisconsin - 1937

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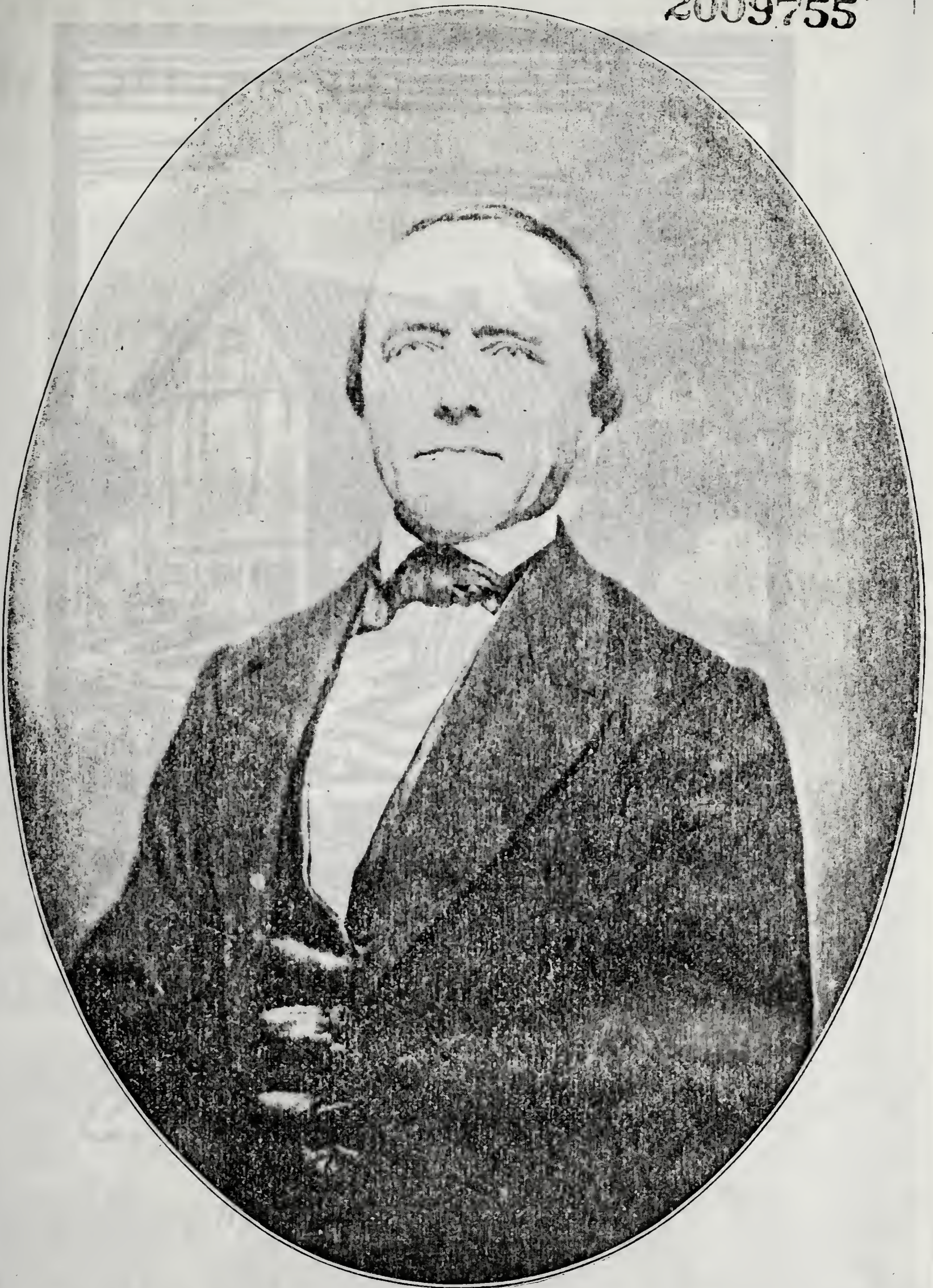
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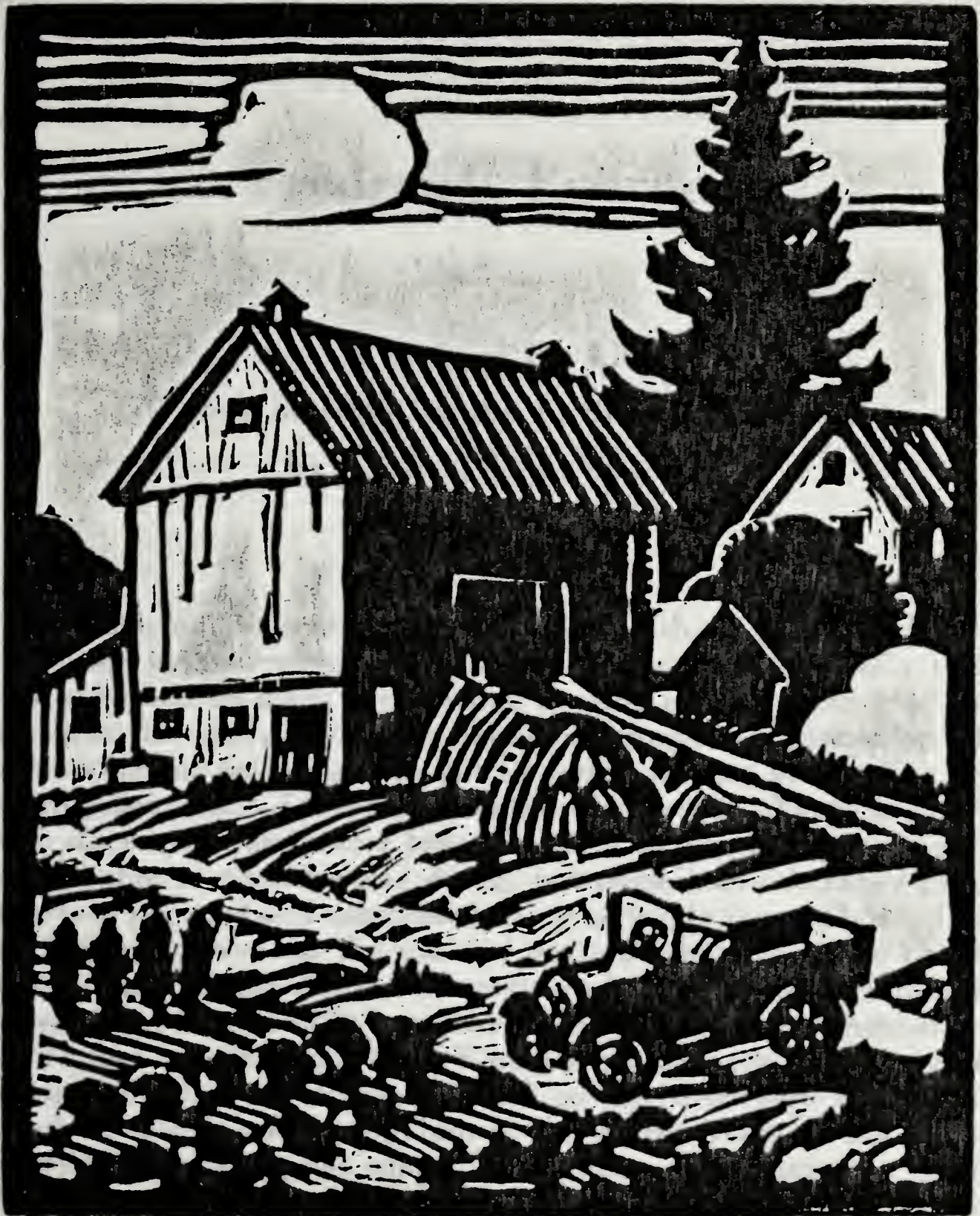
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"The Farm" — By Edward A. Boerner

C. Friedrich Boerner

By Theodore A. Boerner

Frederick Boerner.

A Story of His Life,

Written in 1936 for the F. Boerner Families,

by His Son, T. A. Boerner.

Setting out to write a history of my father's life, I find myself confronted by two major difficulties. One is that I was only twelve years old when he died, and learned nothing directly from him about his earlier life except for some occasional fragments picked up when I listened in on conversations not intended for my ears. The other difficulty lies in the absence of a continuous record. There are indeed a few documents and some letters written to him that supply an occasional clue to what he was doing, but these leave so many gaps at important points that a complete history is simply impossible. Therefore I quickly gave up the idea of writing what might be called a history, and instead will try to set down here in perhaps a rambling fashion what I personally know or have in one way or another been able to find out about his life. Possibly my account may revive forgotten memories in others, or lead to the discovery of forgotten papers or letters written by him in the earlier years of his life that might help in closing up some of the gaps. Then here we go! and if I do not tell of everything he did, I may at least be able to reveal what kind of a man he was.

The first item of family interest will naturally be the family genealogy. This is meagre enough, being only an extract from the church books of "Gemeinde Hatten," made by the pastor, H. Lobeken, Oct. 29, 1894, at the request of Arthur Boerner, Sr. From this extract I take only what is of special interest to us. The record begins with Johann Hinrich Boerner, who came from Thedinghausen

to Hatten where he married Maria Brandts on Oct. 22, 1732. They had six children, of whom the fifth was Christopher Friedrich Boerner, born July 19, 1741. Christopher Friedrich became "Baumann und Wirt" in Hatten and married Margarete Harms by whom he had seven children, of whom the fifth was Christoph Friedrich, born Aug. 8, 1778. Christoph Friedrich also became "Baumann und Wirt" in Hatten, and was twice married, first to Anna Marie Henrietta Ruedebusch of Huntlosen. They had four children:

1. Margaretha Friederika, born May 15, 1808; married in Bremen;
2. Anna Cathrina Henrietta, born Mar. 14, 1810;
3. Christoph Friedrich, (which is Father) born Jan. 16, 1812; emigrated to North America;
4. Catharina Louise, born Feb. 6, 1814; emigrated to Charleston, S. C. with her husband, Johann Friedrich Hilgen.

The second marriage was with Anna Catharina Huntemann of Gereshausen, and was without issue. But after his death the widow married his younger brother, Friedrich Boerner, and with their six children, not named in the record, removed from Hatten. Very likely the whole family emigrated to America, and the six children will account for several uncles and aunts of whom I heard as being in America, but have otherwise no exact knowledge except as to the Christian Boerner who built the store in Cedarburg and later moved to Belleville, Ill., the William Boerner who had a store in Saukville and later I believe moved to Centralia, Ill., and the F. Christopher Boerner who remained in Charleston. About this last I remember hearing talk regarding a disastrous speculation in slaves made by him at the outbreak of the Civil War. Several letters written in 1850 reveal that all three brothers were then in Charleston, but that two of them were likely to come to Wisconsin. William was thoroughly dissatisfied with Charleston and determined to make the move, and while Christian was undecided, his wife and mother, by means of a little indirect pressure, were in a fair way to make up his mind for him. In the letter with which Pastor Lobeken sent the church record he stated that for any earlier genealogy we would have to apply to the "Evangelische Pharrammt in Thedinghausen (Braunschweig)."

Next comes an official document, stamped with the seal of the Duchy of Oldenburg, which carries three declarations. The first, signed by Pastor Solling at Hatten, Aug. 15, 1837, states that

CHRISTOPH FRIEDRICH BOERNER

was born at Hatten on Jan. 16, 1812, and baptized Jan. 23, 1812. The second, signed by a government official at Oldenburg, Aug. 19, 1837, testifies to the authority of Pastor Solling. The third is again by Pastor Solling to the effect that Christoph Friedrich Boerner was confirmed on Apr. 9, 1826. Here I cannot help observing how we are sometimes linked with the distant historical past, in that the older part of the church in which Father was baptized and confirmed was built on ancient Saxon ground some nine hundred years ago, in the days when Charlemagne's christianizing of the Saxons by the sword was still a fairly recent memory. And then comes another official document with the seal of the duchy, being the Travel Pass issued to Christoph Friedrich Boerner on Aug. 16, 1837.

What happened during the preceding twenty five years is almost a blank as far as any authentic data is concerned, with the single exception of the confirmation. How much schooling he had we do not definitely know. A leather bound lesson book, dated 1826, with many mathematical examples worked out as well as some practice in penmanship, composition, and business correspondence, show that he attended some school in Hatten for several years. However, from what I heard in the course of my "listening in," I have reason to believe that later, while he lived and worked in Hatten during the summer, Father spent several winters in Amsterdam, Holland, going to school. The pass designates him as a "Baumann." Just what this means I do not know. Literally translated it would be "Builder." But builder of what? The physical description will interest us all: Age, 25 years; height, 5 ft. 5½ in.; stature, small and firm; hair, blond; forehead, domed; eyes, blue; nose, normal; mouth, small; teeth, healthy; chin, round; beard, full blond; face, round; color, rosy (bluehend); identification marks, none. All this matches with my recollections of Father, except the blond hair and beard. I remember his hair as black. Perhaps the Ayer's Hair Vigor I saw him use had something to do with the change in color. I saw no beard except once when he had neglected to shave for a few days and a gray stubble appeared on his chin. That may have been at the time I had the misfortune of breaking his razor while trying to use it as a whittling knife.

As I was writing this I was asked what moved Frederick Boerner to emigrate at all. I do not know. I never heard him say anything

about it. He may just have taken part in the pretty general exodus of that time from crowded Germany to the wide spaces of America. But there was a more personal lure. The records of the German Fusilier Society of Charleston, S. C., show that his boyhood friend, J. Fred Hilgen, who married the sister Catharina Louise, was resident in Charleston as early as 1834, which fact alone might account for the whole business. This German Fusilier Society, by the way, was an interesting institution. It was of a semi-military character and was organized in 1775 from among the German residents of Charleston to aid in the defense of the colony, and rendered valuable service during the Revolutionary War. Later, by special enactment of the legislature, the German Fusiliers were made a part of the state militia of South Carolina, but were authorized to keep up their special organization and draw their recruits from among the German immigrants that continued to arrive. Incidentally, the roster of the society published in 1846 shows, besides that of F. Hilgen, the names of four others who later figured in the pioneer history of Cedarburg:— Frederick Boerner, Wm. Schroeder, Christian Boerner and F. W. Behrens.

The journey to America seems to have been altogether uneventful. At least I can find no account of it except as it is furnished by the travel pass. This gives the point of embarkation as Brake, a port of Oldenburg on the Weser River about midway between Bremen and the North Sea. And a memorandum on the pass in Father's handwriting tells the rest of the story in laconic style:— "Abgereist von Deutschland Sept. 6, angekommen in New York Oct. 29th, in Charleston Nov. 13th, 1837." The nine weeks and more taken for the journey may look long to us; but this was probably the rule rather than the exception at that time. I noticed however that one important item appears to have been lost during the trip. The travel pass introduces Christoph Friedrich Boerner. The first documentary evidence we have of his residence in America, namely the certificate of citizenship issued by the Court of Common Pleas of Charleston, S. C. on March 24, 1845, calls him Frederick Borner, as also does the roster of the German Fusilier Society, and in both cases the "oe" has been shortened to "o". Why he dropped the name Christoph I do not know, though I can make a reasonable guess. His brother Christian being also resident in Charleston, whether he came across before or after Father I do not know, the similarity of the names Christoph and Christian may have caused confusion, and he decided therefore

to be known by his second rather than by his first name. Another important difference between the Oldenburg travel pass and the American Citizenship paper is to be noted. The travel pass gives his occupation as "Baumann." The citizenship certificate designates him as a "Grocer."

We may be sure that our young immigrant lost no time in finding something profitable to do, and probably began to earn his designation as a grocer from the very beginning. He did not find himself in the common predicament of an immigrant of being a stranger in a strange land, for his Oldenburg friends Fred Hilgen and William Schroeder were already on the ground, besides a number of German people who then appeared to have an important part in the business life of Charleston, and among these he quickly made a place for himself. His particular business, I always understood, was that of operating a general store. But he was not tied down to just one place or thing. Letters from Charleston after he had gone north indicate that he must have had a variety of interests in that city. I know from his own words that at one time he owned two stores, because I once heard him tell how a great fire in Charleston which started in an oil warehouse destroyed a considerable part of the city including both of his stores, and how all he saved from the disaster was his portable bed. However, this disaster appears to have been far from irreparable. Altogether, to the best of my knowledge, the twelve years in Charleston, whatever the nature of the business, were eminently profitable years. He accumulated a respectable fund which proved useful when the time came for establishing a new home as one of the pioneers of Cedarburg. With this important move looming up as a possibility he made a sort of prospecting visit to Cedarburg in 1846. Also in 1848 he found the time and the means for a return visit to Germany. I remember being much interested in hearing about this visit to Germany, mainly because of a certain Swiss music box playing eight tunes which was the wonder and delight of my childhood, and a set of solid silver spoons and some choice porcelain dishes which graced the table on state occasions, that were among the trophies of the visit. In fact, I used to think that the trip to Germany was made largely on a sentimental impulse, but from subsequent letters of Oldenburg friends and relatives it appears that the main purpose was to enlist recruits for the Wisconsin colony. There is one from a cousin, F. Roebken of Hatten, who regrets not having made good on his promise to emigrate in 1848 but says he "will surely be

in Cedarburg by next fall." Another is from an uncle, C. W. Ruedebusch, who moralizes on his meagre facilities with a small house and lot in Oldenburg and says that if he were younger he too would come to America and "buy myself a mile of land; for the landholder is always the big man in his community." Also it is more than probable that the Vosteen family, who settled on the land opposite the Farm in 1850, were among the recruits enlisted at this time.

It is interesting to note here that while Father was absent on these several journeys he left his business in charge of a younger man, one Jurgen Schroeder, in whom he had the utmost confidence and whose strict integrity and faithful stewardship was still the subject of admiring comment when he was the only one of the Charleston group of Cedarburg pioneers living. When Father finally moved to Cedarburg Jurgen Schroeder was again left behind to wind up the Charleston business, after which he himself came north; and when Father's will was probated we find Jurgen Schroeder named as one of the administrators.

One important event of the life in Charleston remains to be recorded. As is the case with most young men, Father found that "it is not good for a man to live alone." He fell in love and married. And here I think it will be convenient to continue and complete the genealogical part of the story. Frederick Boerner was twice married, first on Apr. 30, 1844 at Charleston to Helena Wilhelmina Hussmann, born in Padingbuettel, Hanover, May 21, 1824, who died at Cedarburg, Wis., Nov. 15, 1858. The following children were born:

Christoph Frederick,	Aug. 17, 1846, in Charleston; died Aug. 19, 1849, in Cedarburg;
Frederick William,	Feb. 16, 1850, in Cedarburg; died Nov. 17, 1862, in Milwaukee;
Ernst August,	Oct. 8, 1851, in Cedarburg; died the same day;
Carl Theodore,	Mar. 31, 1853, in Cedarburg; died Nov. 20, 1862, in Milwaukee;
Mathilda Wilhelmina,	Jan. 19, 1856, in Cedarburg; died Sept. 30, 1862, in Milwaukee;
Arthur Richard,	Jan. 26, 1858, in Cedarburg.

I believe there was one more child who was born in Charleston and died there of whom I have no record; the three children who died in Milwaukee were the victims of a diphtheria epidemic.

The second marriage was on Feb. 27, 1859, at Cedarburg to Anna Gesina Vosteen, also a native of Hatten, born Nov. 18, 1841, who had emigrated to Cedarburg with her parents, and who survived him. The following children were born:

Gustave Adolph,	June 28, 1860, in Cedarburg;
Henry Christian,	June 8, 1862, in Milwaukee;
Frederick Christian,	Mar. 10, 1864, in Cedarburg; died May 17, 1869, in Cedarburg;
Theodore Andrew,	Jan. 31, 1866, in Cedarburg;
Mathilda Louisa,	Mar. 10, 1867, in Cedarburg; died Oct. 7, 1868, in Cedarburg;
Oscar Franklin,	Oct. 24, 1869, in Cedarburg;
Ida Helena Gesina,	Dec. 6, 1871, in Cedarburg;
Albert Frederick,	July 9, 1874, in Cedarburg;
Flora Ismine Louise,	Jan. 2, 1877, in Cedarburg.

Thus there were two women in Father's life who, I believe, contributed not a little to what success he achieved, besides sharing to the full in the trials and hardships that seemed to be a necessary part of the family life in pioneer times. I wish I knew more about the first wife, Helena, than is shown in the bare genealogical record. Letters received from the Hilgens and Schroeders when she and Father were getting ready for the move from Charleston to Cedarburg show that she was thinking much and planning much for the making of the family home soon to be established in Wisconsin. There is much reference to flower seeds and plants, from which I infer that she had a good deal to do with the very neat flower and vegetable garden and the Children's play ground and arbor which were still in evidence south of the old house when I was old enough to take notice. The second wife, Anna, is a vivid memory to all of us except the youngest generation, she having died June 17, 1922, and, remembering her contributions to the family welfare as mother and grandmother, we can be sure of the quality of her courage, devotion, and faithful service when as a young wife she assumed the responsibilities of family headship in the pioneer home. Incidentally this second marriage brings to our notice another Hatten family with whom we now seem to be doubly related, namely the Backus family. Grandmother Vosteen was a Backus, and her brother, John Frederick Backus, either in Hatten or in Charleston, married one of Father's half sisters, so that Father and Anna Vosteen were already related as cousins, several times removed, before they entered into the closer relationship of

marriage. And as I contemplate the whole genealogical record, I see an opening, if anyone is inclined to undertake it, for some mathematical exercise to determine the degrees of our relationship to the various branches of the Boerner, Ruedebusch, Hilgen, Vosteen, and Backus families now resident in this country.

And now the scene is definitely transferred to Wisconsin, and more particularly to Cedarburg, though there are indications in some letters that the gold rush to California, on which some of the Charleston friends were embarking, was seriously considered. The specific reason for this second emigration we do not know. The prevalence of yellow fever, to which many of the German immigrants succumbed, may have been a contributing factor. But the chief urge was probably that same pioneering spirit and striving for a wider and freer life which drove them out of crowded Oldenburg. Fred Hilgen and William Schroeder seem to have been the first to make the move. They reached Milwaukee in 1845, and walked from there out to the Cedarburg region, looking for a likely place to settle. They found it in what is now the city and town of Cedarburg, and were soon at work making a road to connect Cedarburg with the Green Bay road at Hamilton. When Father made his preliminary visit in 1846 he found them full of enthusiasm for the new location and left them definitely settled there, in primitive style indeed, but settled anyway. There was much walking over and talking over of land to be bought cheap, water power to be developed, etc., and of course they urged him to hurry up and join them with his family who were needed to help along the social life of the new community.

The subsequent letters reveal the outcome of the visit as far as Father's interest was concerned. William Schroeder and Fred Hilgen were to buy certain lands in their own names, for which he furnished the money; the property to be transferred to him later. It also appeared that he loaned them considerable sums to finance their own ventures. I might remark here that he seems always to have had a fund available from which to make loans to his pioneer friends. From records found among his papers it appears that loans to Hilgen and Schroeder and others continued to be made as long as he lived.

The lands bought for Father in pursuance of the arrangement were the four west forties in section 23 and the north west forty of section 26 in the town of Cedarburg, altogether a tract a mile and a quarter long and a quarter of a mile wide, or 200 acres, extending

from what is now State Highway 60 south along what is now County Trunk I to a point on the other side of Cedar Creek about a quarter of a mile south of the place where County Trunk I turns south westerly to become Sheboygan Street in Cedarburg. This then was a good example of the "mile of land" which lured many a German pioneer across the sea. One thing that seems to have made the tract look desirable to the pioneers was the fact that Cedar Creek runs through its entire length, close to the eastern edge of the four north forties and then cutting diagonally across the lower forty. The land was already partly cleared in 1846, but further clearing was probably done and several buildings erected before 1849, when Father came up to take possession. The first building was a barn on the northern part of the property, placed there, according to one letter, because of a natural spring found in that part. In later years, when this particular piece of land was acquired by the Buch family, this barn was moved across the road, where it still stands, a part of the Buch farm establishment. Next came the house and barn on the southern part of the property where Father was to make his domicile. The house was built in the north west corner of section 26 where the road turns, and, as near as I can remember, was of oblong shape, one and one half stories high, broad side fronting the street, entrance in the middle by a small porch leading into a center hall with two rooms on each side, a one story structure being added in the rear. When the present house was built on the same ground in 1884 the old house was used for a while as a chicken house and storehouse, but soon deteriorated and was dismantled. I notice here that exact property lines were not thought very important in those days, the barn having been built straddling the section line between sections 23 and 26. The barn is still standing and, except for a few modern alterations, is still the same old barn that was erected nearly ninety years ago.

The real estate records, for which I am indebted to Oscar F. Boerner who gathered them while he was Register of Deeds of Ozaukee County, show that the two north forties of the property were bought by Wm. Schroeder May 28, 1846, and transferred to F. Boerner May 31, 1849, while the three south forties were bought by Frederick Hilgen Feb. 28, 1845, and transferred to F. Boerner June 14, 1849. It was then evidently early in 1849 that Frederick Boerner settled with his family on his Wisconsin property, a property which only a few years earlier must have been a favorite Indian hunting ground, judging from the many stone arrow heads which have since

been found on it. Then followed a ten year period of strenuous work, clearing and planting. It was then that the big spruce tree which now dominates the scene was set in its place, and the cedar hedge with the garden and orchard behind it marked the transformation of a wilderness into a home of civilized life. In the meantime crops had to be sown and harvested under what we would now call very primitive conditions. I heard something about these pioneer labors on one memorable occasion many years later when Father one Sunday took the whole family on a visit to Fred Behrens who had developed a prosperous farm about two miles north of Cedarburg. When I came to know him better I regarded this Fred Behrens as a type of the successful American farmer. I once heard him say that "a farmer is best off when he is in debt. He has something to work for." He himself followed this rule. When he had his first farm paid for he bought another in the neighborhood and went in debt for it, which he repeated several times with the result that when he died there were several respectable farms besides the original homestead to pass on to his children.

But to get back to my story, evidently I was not old enough to be trusted outside with the other boys, and was kept in the parlor all afternoon with the old folks. It must have been a sort of old settlers' meeting. At least the talk was mostly of their pioneer experiences, and, except for what time I lost in falling off a high and slippery chair and having Mother hoist me up again, I listened. I heard of how they cut down the forest trees, using what they needed for buildings, while the rest was hauled into a great pile and burned. Much fine timber must have gone to waste there, but probably was not thought of then as much of an asset. They told about raising the first crop of wheat among the stumps and threshing it on the barn floor with flails. Thinking of sowing and reaping reminds me here of how I once saw Father marching back and forth over a field with a pan of seed in his left hand and scattering the seed with his right, and how I helped myself from a bag standing at the side and tried to follow his example, apparently with poor results, for he stopped to show me how it should be done "dass der Wind es nicht fort blaset." ("that the wind does not blow it away.") One story told of a forest giant loaded down with passenger pigeons and of how the tree was chopped down and all the families round about shared in a great pigeon feast. I wondered then, and do now, why the pigeons, having wings to fly, did not fly away when the tree was cut down. I recall particularly

a story by grandfather Vosteen of how from the front porch of his house, a house still standing opposite our present Farm Home, he shot a deer coming down the road. That must have been when he was young and strong, quite different from what he was when often I saw him sitting on that same front porch knitting stockings. I think it was at this time too that I heard of one of the Charleston to Cedarburg pioneers who made the journey by way of New Orleans and the Mississippi River. I have often tried to figure out over what route Father came to Cedarburg without a satisfactory solution. But it is not at all likely that he took so roundabout a way.

From some of the letters left from this period of farm development I gather that Father's mind was busy on other matters as well, and making preparations for another move. But before going into this I want to tell the story of the real estate transactions connected with the farm property which brought it down to its present size. Here is the record, as prepared for me by Oscar F. Boerner:

Purchases:

May 31, 1849, the 2 north forties from Wm. Schroeder,	80 acres for -----	\$ 720.00
June 14, 1849, the 3 south forties from Frederick Hilgen,	120 acres for -----	575.00
Total purchase	200 acres for -----	\$1295.00

Sales:

Apr. 4, 1856, 2nd forty from north to C. Schaefer	40 acres for	\$ 600.00
June 24, 1856, 1st forty from north to H. Seidenstich	40 acres for	775.00
Dec. 2, 1859, Piece in Section 26 to Christian Decker	5 acres for	125.00
Mar. 1, 1860, Piece in Section 26 to Eilert Stallmann	11.57 acres for	304.29
Sept. 12, 1860, Piece in Section 23 to Jacob Stern	12 acres for	420.00
Sept. 18, 1860, Piece in Section 23 to John Hespe	10 acres for	350.00
Oct. 22, 1860, Piece in Section 26 to Frederick Asche	6 acres for	132.00
June 6, 1861, Piece in Section 26 to Ernst Heiser	3 acres for	75.00

Aug. 31, 1861, Piece in Section 23 to Frederick Parzloff	4.09 acres for	200.00
July 23, 1862, Piece in Section 23 to John Hespe	10 acres for	310.00
Nov. 25, 1862, Piece in Section 23 to Ferdinand Burteen	2.64 acres for	61.00

Total Sales ---- 144.3 acres for \$3352.29

Thus the property which Father bought for \$1295.00 he sold in part for \$3352.29, retaining possession of what I consider the best part of the land, being the part in sections 23 and 26 extending south from the "Hespe line" and bounded on the east and south by Cedar Creek, including the house, barn, garden, orchard, and a fine bit of natural forest. According to the foregoing figures this remaining piece should measure 55.7 acres. The record in the office of the Register of Deeds makes it 54 acres. I am unable to account for this slight discrepancy. And I note another peculiar condition. When we hear about 54 acres we usually understand it to mean 54 acres of land. But in this case 10 of the 54 acres of land are water. When the parcels east of Cedar Creek were sold the deeds read "from the east bank of Cedar Creek." Consequently our land, all of which appears to lie west of Cedar Creek, includes about one third of a mile of that stream with a surface area of about ten acres. The small triangular piece of land lying between the cedar hedge and Sheboygan Street was not a part of the original tract, but was acquired by the Estate on Feb. 15, 1896 from G. A. Boerner.

Two more records in the office of the Register of Deeds are of special interest to the F. Boerner families. One is a quit claim deed made Jan. 6, 1859 by Frederick Boerner to Christian Boerner, conveying that portion of lands in sections 23 and 26 "which is now covered by the water of Cedar Creek by reason of a certain mill dam owned by the said second party, etc." This is the earliest evidence we have of the presence of Christian Boerner in Cedarburg, and indicates that at one time he owned the water power now known as the Wollen Mills Dam.

The other record relates to a certain mortgage, dated June 4, 1856, given by Frederick Boerner and Helena his wife to Milwaukee & Superior Rail Road Company, covering the 120 acres in sections 23 and 26, "to secure the payment of \$500.00 payable as per conditions of one note of even date herewith." Written on the margin

of the record is a notation under date of Oct. 18, 1869: "This mortgage is satisfied under chapter 186 of the General Laws of the State of Wisconsin for 1864," signed by John C. Schroeling, Reg. of Deeds, per B. A. Zastrow, Deputy; from all of which it appears that Father was among the victims of the gigantic railroad swindle which hit so many Wisconsin farmers at that time. I quote from an article by William F. Raney in the June 1936 number of the Wisconsin Magazine of History on The Building of Wisconsin Railroads: "Besides the municipalities the railroads exploited private citizens, especially the farmers who so much desired their facilities. Between 1850 and 1857 some 6000 Wisconsin farmers mortgaged their farms for a total of nearly \$5,000,000. The agents of the companies gave stock certificates to the farmers in exchange for the mortgages which they immediately sold to investors in the eastern states. Then in the panic of 1857 every railroad in the state went into bankruptcy, and the farmers were left with a lot of worthless paper. Compromise and legislation did something to remedy this situation during the decade of the Civil War, but it has remained one of the most painful episodes in the history of Wisconsin railroad finance."

From all I can find out about the particular case in which Father was concerned, it seems that the promoters were plainly out to "do" the Wisconsin farmers and never had the least intention of building a railroad, because the Milwaukee & Superior Rail Road Company does not even appear to have had a state charter. The nearest they came to building a railroad was when, as the popular story goes, they were moved by some vigorous grumbling on the part of the farmer subscribers, and offered them the job of grading the road. Accordingly, one Monday morning came a goodly number of farmers with their teams and tools and put in a week of hard work. But when Saturday evening came and they were ready to receive their pay the promoters had disappeared and were never seen again. If some archaeologist were to explore the region between Cedarburg and Grafton he might be surprised to learn that what he took for an Indian mound was only the beginning and the end of the Milwaukee & Superior Rail Road. The mortgages were indeed cancelled by act of the legislature in 1864, but in the meantime, in harmony with the regular routine followed in such rackets, the notes had come into the possession of the convenient "innocent purchaser" and had to be paid. The innocent purchaser in Father's case was a certain Eijah W. Carpenter, and the money was paid to this man's agents in Milwaukee some time

in 1869. Gustave A. Boerner, then about nine years old, was with Father at the time and remembers that "\$700.00 in currency was paid for that R. R. mortgage."

And now I come to a part of the F. Boerner story for which I have to depend almost entirely on circumstantial evidence, only one document and a few letters being in my possession that give any clue to what was going on, though I think there must be some entries in the real estate records of Milwaukee County between 1850 and 1870 that would throw some light on the subject. A letter from Oldenburg in 1850 refers to a statement by Father that he had some intention of buying property in Milwaukee. Evidently the intention soon ripened into reality, for he owned property there in 1852, as appears from the letters of several Milwaukee parties who wanted to lease or buy his house and lot, location not stated, and asked him to come in and see them about it. He must have carried on all the negotiations in person as the subsequent letters give only a hint of what is happening. Under date of Apr. 28, 1853 I find several bids for erecting a building on the corner of Oneida (now E. Wells) and Market streets, and on Apr. 14, 1856 a letter from a Mr. Inbusch stating that the sum of \$5000.00 had been arranged for. This being also the year in which he sold the two north forties of the Cedarburg land, I infer that the money was used to build the three story brick building which is still standing on the north east corner of East Wells and North Market streets, opposite the city hall. It was however not until 1862, according to Mother's account, that the family moved to Milwaukee and lived in the building. In the meantime he seems to have had more or less trouble in collecting rents from the tenants installed, which may have had something^{to do} with his decision to occupy the premises himself. On what was done here I have no information except what Mother said about the family living on the upper floors. The ground floor of the building now houses a flower store, and I have no doubt that Father conducted some kind of store on the premises. However, the venture did not last long, for in 1864 the family was back on the Farm. Very soon after this comes the final move. As I understand it, Christian Boerner had built a store in the heart of Cedarburg, opposite what was then an open square used as a place for holding the monthly cattle fairs, and facing the Hilgen & Schroeder mill beyond. This property Christian Boerner traded to Father for his Milwaukee property, the trade as far as I know being "even up." The one document we have relating to the several moves from

the Farm to Milwaukee, back from Milwaukee to the Farm, and then to the store in Cedarburg, reads as follows:

Cedarburg, November 7th, 1866.

I have this day sold to Frederick Borner of Cedarburg all the goods, wares and merchandise of whatever description together with the scales, weights, etc. belonging to the store and used heretofore in my dealings; which said goods etc. are now in my store and cellar in Cedarburg for the sum of Six Thousand Dollars the receipt of which I hereby acknowledge.

In presence of

F. W. Horn.

Christian Borner.

From his son Frank I learned that Christian Boerner sold the Milwaukee property to a Mr. Nunnemacher. Uncle Christian is said to have been afflicted with a severe case of inflammatory rheumatism and was advised to get as far away from Lake Michigan as possible, whereupon he moved to Belleville, Ill. He did not long survive the removal, having died in Belleville Sept. 11, 1871, according to a letter found recently in the old Schroeder residence after the death of Mrs. John Grundtke, daughter of Wm. Schroeder, containing a printed invitation to the funeral. This formal invitation, by the way, was quite in line with an old German custom still followed in Cedarburg when I was a boy of sending a special messenger, appropriately garbed, from house to house with word of mouth invitations to weddings, funerals, etc.

The premises which Father thus acquired and where he remained with his family the rest of his life has undergone so many changes since his day that he would hardly recognize it if he were to see it now. About the only thing left of the old is the store building, and this has been considerably enlarged in the rear, and its interior so altered that practically only the shell of the original building remains; and during the present year it has been transformed into a moving picture theatre. The property included ground extending from what is now Washington Street to the next street west, now Third Avenue, which used to be known as Velvet Street, probably because of its velvety turf, it being used then for little else than pasturing cows. The ground plan was of irregular shape, narrow in the front and wide in the rear. The front extended from the old Washington House, a rambling frame structure jutting some six feet out into the street, on the north, to the Tillman property, now Kuhfus,

on the south. Approximately four hundred feet back of this the ground widened on both sides to a good sized field fenced off from the rest, extending from the Schroeder property on the north to the Lauterbach property on the south. I helped harvest many a load of hay from this field which was used also as a pasture for cows and horses. Besides that it was a favorite play ground for the children. A small stream ran across it, fed by a spring in the hills west of town, and was put to use for our sports, as was also an old quarry which probably had supplied the stone for the barn and the foundations for the brick store building. All this has now been obliterated by the double line of residences and the interurban station along Center Street which runs through the whole length of the property, the stream having been made to flow partly underground along the side of the interurban tracks.

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All the buildings on the property were on the narrower front portion. Next to the Washington House was a wide entrance to the store yard where Center Street now begins, then the store building which of course was also the residence, while the rest of the front, where the Wiesler Hotel now stands, was flower garden and orchard, dominated by two large spruce trees at the front, with a vegetable garden in the rear up to the pasture. The ample yard on the side and rear of the store I remember seeing lined with rows of salt barrels, piles of cord wood, a wood shed, tool shed and wagon shed, then a large stone barn, and off in one corner a smoke house. A picket fence separated the garden from the yard. Fences, in fact, were very much in evidence. Except for the space taken by the store a picket fence guarded the whole street front, and I remember having many a hard tussel with the front gate into the yard. Back of the barn was a typical barn yard, separated by another fence from the garden and pasture. Of the store building only the north half of the lower floor and cellar was given over to business. The rest was family quarters. A wide, double decked, pillared wooden porch with ornamental railings protecting both decks extended along the whole south front. This architectural addition was probably suggested by Father's former residence in Charleston. The family entrance was from the porch in the center of the south front into a hall which was a sort of radiating point for the rest of the building. From the end of the hall a door opened into the store, one on the right into the parlor, and one on the left into the dining room, and between the last two a straight stairway led to the upper floor. This stairway was

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provided with a strong banister which was much used by the youngsters as a slide. I never felt very comfortable in the parlor which looked rather stiff and formal, and I usually got into trouble when company was there, slipping off the horsehair furniture. But I did sneak in alone sometimes to admire myself in a large mirror standing between the two east windows, listen to the waves of the sea by means of two large shells lying on the base of the mirror, and gaze with some awe at the two great bouquets of wax flowers which flanked the mirror on either side and were shielded from my profaning touch under two enormous glass tubes. The real family home was on the second floor, in the room above the parlor, the scene of many a quiet and happy evening with Father and Mother and all the children gathered together. The rest of the upstairs was bed rooms, with the exception of one dark room, the only one without a window, which we used to call the lumber room. (Rumpel Kammer.) There were no pantries or closets in the house, these modern conveniences being represented by several large portable cupboards and wardrobes.

Here then Father spent the last twelve years of his family and business life. There is therefore not much more to tell, as little seemed to happen that was outside of the ordinary routine of a country-store keeper's life. However, the many letters coming during all the years since he left the South from Charleston and elsewhere indicate that he kept in close touch with his friends outside of Cedarburg. In these letters I notice a tone that seems to acknowledge the sympathetic understanding and the readiness to help his friends over difficult situations, which I believe was the outstanding characteristic of his life. Among the Charleston letters it is interesting to note with what detail J. Claussen, F. Backus, J. D. Kleinbeck, and Carl Ruedebusch tell about their family and business affairs, and rather intriguing to me are the frequent references to a certain venture in Pickens, a place near Charleston, where it seems they were trying to establish a cooperative German colony. I am wondering what came of the venture and whether Father had more than a sympathetic interest in it. One of the letters from elsewhere is rather out of the ordinary and somewhat of a delightful classic with its Americanized German patois and its mixture of fun and feeling. Writing from San Francisco in 1867 one H. D. Ellerhorst tells about his prosperous business and then reminds Father of an incident in Charleston many years before "wie ein Schiff in distress mit Corn von New Orleans kam und das Corn am Wharf on ac. of Underwriters oeffentlich verkauft wurde.

und du mir frugs warum ich nicht kaufte, und ich dir zur Antwort gab weil ich kein Geld hatte sagtest du ich konnte Geld von dir haben, das gab mir gleich ductige courage und ich pischte gleich ein und kaufte the balance fuer 25 cents das Bushel aber durch some hoco pocos koste mir das Corn ungefaehr 10 cents in Store, das letzte verkaufte ich mit \$1.25 den Bushel, wen es nicht fuer dir gewesen wurde haette ich nicht getraut ein gebot zu machen." (Quotation freely translated: "how a ship in distress with corn came from New Orleans and the corn was put on open sale on the wharf by the underwriters, and you asked me why I did not buy, and I gave answer, because I had no money, and you said I could have money from you; that at once gave me great courage and I pitched right in and bought the balance for 25 cents a bushel, but through some hocus pocus the corn cost me about 10 cents in the store; the last I sold for \$1.25 a bushel; if it had not been for you I would not have had the courage to bid.") Evidently this transaction put the man on his financial feet, and he renewed his thanks accordingly. The worldly wise might have asked Father why he did not handle this profitable deal on his own account instead of giving it to his impecunious friend. But that was not Father's way. In the Charleston correspondence I also find an agent's statement relating to receipts from a house in Beaufort and a house in Charleston, from which it appears that his interests in South Carolina continued to be financial as well as friendly.

In the meantime the children were growing up, and Father did what he could to give them some education and training beyond what was offered by the public School. In 1876 the oldest son, Arthur, went to the Spencerian Business College at Milwaukee for a six months course, and in 1878 Gustave was sent to the same school. After finishing at college Arthur found a job in the office of a Milwaukee manufacturer which he held until Father's death brought him back home. Of special interest to us are several letters he had from Father during this time, which were fortunately preserved, and are all the more worthy of note because they are the only letters of the many Father must have written which we have been ~~unable~~ able to locate. The letters of course are written in German which was the family language, though in their conversation with each other Father and Mother often used the "Platt-Deutsch" of Hatten, and the extracts which follow are rather freely translated. The earliest we have is dated Nov. 10, 1876, in which he enlarges on the important matter of applying for a job: "You write that Mr. Segnitz is very friendly towards you. This

is very nice and it pleases me that it is so. But that does not help much when you cannot earn enough with him to maintain yourself. If you apply to Mr. Morgan for a position, tell him who you are, and that you have grown up in business, and understand your business. I have had a card from Mr. Morgan, and if he gives you a position I will make all my purchases from him. Should there be nothing doing at Morgan's, then try elsewhere. In the beginning you must not ask about wages, first you must show the people what you can accomplish. The main thing is that you get a place where you can learn something, and eventually bring it so far that the position will look for you and you no longer need to look for a position. But if you can find nothing, then come home, because, to work for a bare living in a place where you can learn nothing and have to do things anyone can do who has learned nothing, that is too degrading. So far it must not come; then better be a farmer." Some of the letters refer only to some business to be attended to for him in Milwaukee, like this one, of Nov. 2, 1877: "Yesterday we sent 7 barrels apples to Otto Jurgens & Co., namely 5 Seek No Further and 2 Golden Russet. Go and tell them to sell them at once and not let them stand. I have written the name in lead pencil on each barrel. Tell them they are choice apples. Driving in is now done for. You might also go to the college and inquire about terms. Gustave must soon go there. (Der Gustaff muss da bald hin.)" Another of Nov. 12, 1877 is just a short note: "I bought a silk hat at Fred Gunther which ought to be ready now. If you come out next Sunday you might bring it along, but if not then send it by express. I told Gunther you would call for it." And still another, written Nov. 30, 1877: "Be so good as to go to Ziegler and tell him by all means to send us the bill for the candy toys. We have had the goods here several days, have written them about it, and still have received no bill. Then go to Hoeger's and buy 4 dozen picture calendars like the kind we used to sell for 5 cents with a large multiplication table (ein mal eins) on the back cover. Buy them as cheap as you can and send them out with your clothes soon as possible; we need them now." A letter of Dec. 19, 1877, I take as a characteristic comment on extravagant notions: "To my mind you need not make any large presents. For that you have no money. Make the child a present of a silver half dollar, or at most a silver dollar; that is enough for you. When you have once come so far as to have earned several thousand dollars, then the matter is different, but now it will not go." The last two letters we have I give complete:

Cedarburg, Jan. 30, 1878.

Dear Arthur:

Enclosed you will find \$71.43 which you can pay to H. Stern & Bro. This is 2 cts. over the account which they will no doubt return to you. When you send out your wash send along 5 lb. Plaster Paris, the stuff used for repairing lamps. Buy it at Baumbach's, pay for it, and send it out this week if you can.

As I see from your letter Segnitz has spoken well to you. I judge by it that you are well liked and are on the right way to make a name for yourself. Keep at it and it will go well with you. Always strive to help your business; that is the best you can do for yourself and at the same time make yourself a name that will be known throughout the city. Do nothing that can injure your good name, take not the least that does not belong to you, do not permit yourself to be misled by others, do not go into bad company but hold yourself to those you know to be honest and good; the world sees all this and judges accordingly.

Should you not have time for the above errand, let Gustave attend to it, but send me a card that I may know the money has been received.

Your Father,
F. Boerner.

Cedarburg, Feb. 5, 1878.

Dear Arthur:

I have the opportunity now to lend out the money. I think it best for you to go to the bank and get a check for the whole \$500.00 in my name and send it to me by registered letter; then I can give the check out here. I enclose a letter for Gustave which was written yesterday and forgotten. In it I send him \$5.00. I hope he is getting on right well.

Your Father,
F. Boerner.

In Cedarburg Father naturally took an active part in the community. I find among his papers a certificate for two shares of stock in the Cedarburg Turn Verein, and recall that the Turn Verein was then the center of both the social and community life of the town. Here I am reminded that the boys in the family took part in the ath-

letic exercises of the Turn Verein under the instruction of Henry Wehausen, and that we had the means for much auxiliary practice on the turning pole and trapeze swing Father erected along the garden side of the barn. Near this he also put up a vine covered arbor to which Mother often came with her sewing on hot summer afternoons while the children found delectable diversion in the sand pile in the center. The needs of the business took Father on frequent trips to Milwaukee, always, so far as I know, by his own conveyance, a spring wagon drawn by one horse. He seems to have made little use of the railroad which came to Cedarburg early in the seventies, perhaps because of his unpleasant experience with the abortive railroad investment of the fifties. These Milwaukee trips were usually all day affairs, the wagon being loaded the night before with eggs, butter, apples, etc. to be disposed of in the city, then off in the morning before daylight and, after a busy day among the jobbers, home again through the night with a load of merchandise for the store. On these trips he often took one or more of the children along, and it was my good fortune several times to be one of the party. As I think of it now the homeward bound drive in the dark was the best part of the trip, when it was Father's custom to relieve the tedium of the way by singing some of the old German folk songs. Then there were occasional trips to Port Washington, of which I recall one in particular when Henry and I were with him and he left us at the lake shore while he attended to his business, and I remember being much alarmed when he drove right into the water and let the horse take a drink out of Lake Michigan. Of a pleasant memory too are the times when he hitched the horse to the carriage and took the family for an afternoon at the Farm or a drive through the country.

The only large break in this routine that I know of came in 1876, when he was gone from Sept. 26 to Oct. 7, to visit the Centennial Exposition at Philadelphia and spend a day to see the sights of Washington. Of what he saw at the Centennial I remember particularly his report of the electric light which was there introduced to the world. I do not know what he thought of its possibilities, but have often wondered what his reflections may have been when he contrasted "das wunderbare Licht," as he called it, with the home made tallow candles of his pioneer days at the Farm. Of course, during these twelve years at the store the Farm was not forgotten. A tenant was installed who worked the purely agricultural part on shares, but orchard and garden remained the special care of Father and the family, in which we all contributed our part to keep things going.

This about finishes my story, but before closing I want to refer in general to the letters Father received after he left Charleston, because, besides the personal matters contained therein, many of them have accounts and views about things political, social, and industrial which give them something of a historical value. The letters from Charleston, for instance, paint a revealing picture of the ups and downs of business in that city, tell some odd tales about muddy politics and police grafting, and bring out a few things about life in the South which history does not mention. Then there is a series of letters from one of the cooperative colonists and the comments of Charleston correspondents on the venture from which one might write an epic on the rise and fall of Walhalla, the German colony in Pickens, which was started with such high hopes in the late forties but seems to have collapsed in 1860. A long letter from J. Claussen, cracker manufacturer, tells how Charleston looked to him during and immediately after the Civil War. And from F. W. Claussen, who was something of a traveler and a voluminous writer, come several informative letters about San Francisco and California during the golden years of the fifties. Also there are a number of fine letters from a cousin, A. Pueschelberger of Hatten, in which, besides a lot of news about relatives and friends, there is much shrewd comment on the European liberal movements of the forties and fifties and their failure as it affected Oldenburg. All of this will be interesting reading for anyone who has the ability and gives it the time, most of the letters being of course written in German.

And here my rambling narrative draws to its close. Frederick Boerner died in Cedarburg Sept. 17, 1878. The survivors in his immediate family were the children, Arthur R., Gustave A., Henry C., Theodore A., Oscar F., Ida H., Albert F., Flora I., and the widow, who before long became the revered "Oma" of the succeeding generation.

